

# U-BOAT ATTACKS U. S. WARSHIP

## DESTROYER SMITH NEAR DESTRUCTION BY TORPEDO; ESCAPES BY THIRTY YARDS

Only One Hundred Miles South of New York Harbor When Fired on by the Submarine.

## ENEMY VESSEL WAS SUBMERGED AND DISAPPEARED IN DARKNESS

Appearance in American Waters May Mark Beginning of Attempt to Blockade United States Ports—Not a Surprise to Officials of Government.

A German submarine today fired on the destroyer Smith about 100 miles south of New York. The Navy Department made the following announcement: "Reported from Fire Island lightship to the naval stations at Boston and New York at 3:30 a.m. on the 17th an enemy submarine was sighted by the U. S. S. Smith, running apparently submerged. Submarine fired a torpedo at the U. S. S. Smith, which missed her by thirty yards. The wake of the torpedo was plainly seen crossing the bow. Submarine disappeared."

SMITH'S WIRELESS REPORT PICKED UP. First information of the encounter came to the Navy Department in a roundabout way from the Boston navy yard, which picked up the Smith's report saying she had been fired upon by a German U-boat.

The Navy Department, after communicating with Fire Island, Boston, New York and some other points on the Atlantic coast, announced that the report of the Smith's encounter had been substantiated by official investigation.

Raid or German Blockade. Whether the presence of the German submarine merely foreshadows a sporadic raid, such as the U-53 conducted off the New England coast, or whether it is the signal for the beginning of a general submarine blockade of the Atlantic coast is not yet known.

The attack by the U-boat is Germany's first recognition of the state of war declared by the United States. It was stated in Germany soon after the action of Congress that no aggressive steps would be taken against the United States.

Not Taken Seriously. Practically no American officials believed this statement, however, and steps to meet aggressive moves were at once taken. The probability of submarine attack on unprotected seaboard cities and towns, raids on shipping within sight of American shores and a submarine blockade of the principal Atlantic ports with the purpose of terrorizing shipping and people was expected.

Last week word came to Washington in a roundabout way that Germany was about to declare a prohibited submarine zone about the harbors at Boston, New York, the Delaware capes, Chesapeake bay, Charleston and Savannah. This would have included all the important ports on the Atlantic seaboard. It was said then that an official warning to neutrals of the prohibited zone would be issued from Berlin.

Credited by Entente Diplomats. Some American officials were disinclined to credit the report, but the entente diplomatic corps here believed it and predicted that Germany would soon carry the submarine campaign to this side of the Atlantic, principally for the purpose of scaring neutral shipping away from American harbors and to raid the great squadrons of merchant ships which are moving food and supplies to America's allies on the European battle fronts.

The possibility of a German submarine base in the Gulf of Mexico has, however, long been recognized. The possibility that merchant submarines of the Deutschland type, now converted to carriers of fuel oil and supplies, might accompany flotillas of the war boats on their transatlantic raids is recognized as being ever present.

The possibility of bases having been planted by the German raiders reconnoitered at large in the South Atlantic is one of the foremost. It even has been suspected that parts of submarines had been shipped to Mexico and assembled there, but by many well informed officials that is doubted.

Believe in Mother Ship. Many officials here always have believed that the U-53 had another ship somewhere down on the horizon. The possibility that merchant submarines of the Deutschland type, now converted to carriers of fuel oil and supplies, might accompany flotillas of the war boats on their transatlantic raids is recognized as being ever present.

Raiders of Other Bases. There also have been many reports of secret bases established on the rocky and inaccessible coasts of Maine and

## TO CANCEL DEBT ON MEMORIAL HALL

D. A. R. Delegates Announce Donations Sufficient to Pay Remaining \$15,000.

## REPORT ON MANAGEMENT

Donations to pay off the \$15,000 debt on Memorial Continental Hall were the main incidents of this afternoon's session of the Congress of the National Society of the D. A. R. While the total amount of donations is not yet summed up, there is no doubt in the minds of the officials that it will cancel the indebtedness.

After the first payment there remained \$15,000 due, obligated for during the administration of Mrs. Donald McLean. In seven years the debt was reduced to \$15,000.

In the following three years, during the administration of Mrs. William Cummings Story, \$100,000 was paid off. Another \$10,000 has gone toward canceling the debt the past year, leaving three bonds of \$5,000 each.

The president general, Mrs. Story, made her report this morning as chairman of the national board of management. She told of the purchase of adjoining land to avoid bad neighbors for Continental Hall; of the condition of the debt on the hall, and also advocated strongly the continuance of the Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine.

Report of Management. The president general, reporting as chairman of the national board of management, told of improvements in efficiency methods during her incumbency. Waste of time has been eliminated and business facilitated. She reviewed the status of the debt on Memorial Continental Hall and described the transaction by which adjoining land was acquired at a low price, to avoid undesirable neighbors, and at a cost that she held could be paid easily from the regular revenues.

"As you are well aware," she continued, "the inspiration for the building of Memorial Continental Hall, a loan was made which left a debt upon the hall of \$15,000. During the seven years following this debt was decreased by payment of \$65,000, and the debt was reduced to \$100,000, and since that time, and very largely due to the efforts of Miss Alice Louise McDuff, the debt has been further reduced, so that today we owe \$15,000."

Magazine Proves Worth. Regarding the D. A. R. magazine, Mrs. Story said it was impossible to measure the great educational value of placing it in the hands of 96,000 members.

"Such a valuable historic and genealogical data, such inspiration to patriotism as our magazine gives forth, and as a medium of communication, especially at this time of national upheaval, when concerted efforts on the part of our members are needed for our definite and distinct work, to fail to send this monthly magazine to all our members, would be a serious loss."

In view of the heavy expense of the initial months of the large issue, she continued, it was necessary to make special arrangements to finance the undertaking. The national board of management voted to make a loan sufficient to meet the expense—\$25,000—with the note of the national society as security. She anticipated that the person who would justify the continuance of the magazine.

Mrs. Story recited the fact that the October issue of the magazine had been sold for \$149,000 for the relief of Belgians.



## REPORT OF ARRIVAL OF ENVOYS DENIED

State Department Not Informed of Landing of British War Commissioners.

## PLANS ARE KEPT SECRET

Plans for receiving the British and French war commissioners went forward in secret today under special orders of the State Department. The British war commissioners would arrive later than the British members, but inasmuch as some of the conferences are to be conducted separately, it was deemed necessary to keep the plans secret.

The indications today were that the French commissioners would arrive later than the British members, but inasmuch as some of the conferences are to be conducted separately, it was deemed necessary to keep the plans secret.

American officials representing the executive branch of the government, the army and the navy, have completed their preparations for receiving and looking after the welfare of the commissioners while they are in Washington.

Have Not Yet Arrived. Official announcement was made at the State Department that "so far as the department's information was concerned the British commission, headed by Foreign Secretary Balfour, had not arrived in this country and reports to the contrary were utterly false and made from whole cloth."

Added to this announcement was a statement that after the commission arrives here and the conferences between the British and American officials begin, no part of the discussions will be made public.

The latter statement, however, appeared to reflect only the attitude of State Department officials. Other administration officials said plans for publicity had not been decided upon. One cabinet officer stated the conference was a matter of tremendous importance.

Harvard College Club Burned. CAMBRIDGE, Mass., April 17.—Costly furniture and fittings were ruined by fire, water and smoke when flames swept through the two upper stories of the Spee Club, a Harvard college club building on Holyoke street, early today. The loss is estimated at \$40,000.

## WILL SUPPLY BOATS FOR U. S. COMMERCE

Shipping Board Fleet Incorporation, Just Formed, Is Capitalized at \$50,000,000.

## HEADED BY GEN. GOETHALS

The United States Shipping Board Emergency Fleet Corporation was chartered today by certificate filed with Recorder of Deeds Costello. The capital stock is placed at \$50,000,000, divided into 500,000 shares of \$100 each. The corporation is to be perpetual and is formed for the purchase, construction, equipment, lease, charter, maintenance and operation of merchant vessels in the commerce of the United States.

The incorporators, who are also to serve as trustees for the first year, are: George W. Goethals, 43 Exchange place, New York city; William Denman, 1020 Merchants' Exchange building, San Francisco, Cal.; John A. Donald, 18 Broadway, New York city; William L. Soleau, 1381 Harvard street, Washington; Richard H. Bailey, Jr., 1400 Connecticut, Washington; Timothy C. Abbott, 2023 Park road northwest, and Ellsworth P. Berthoff, 1463 Harvard terrace, Washington.

Col. Crosby Arranging Details. Col. Spencer Crosby, Corps of Engineers, stationed at Milwaukee, Wis., has arrived in this city under special orders to report to the Secretary of State and arrange the details of the plans for the reception of the French delegation. The delegation is headed by M. Viviani, vice president of the French council, and includes in its membership Gen. Joffre, hero of the Marne.

While in this city they will be domiciled in the dwelling of former ambassador Henry White, on Belmont street near 16th street. Col. Crosby is the only member of the American reception committee yet appointed. He was recently relieved from a tour of duty at Paris as an attaché of the United States embassy to France. Before he went abroad he was superintendent of public buildings and grounds, and earlier District Engineer Commissioner.

Record in Capitalization. The incorporation has the largest capitalization ever authorized under the District law since the enactment of the code amendment fixing a tax of 40 cents for each \$1,000 of capital stock. The incorporators turned over a check for \$20,000 to the recorder of deeds for the tax assessment. Another check for \$1,400 was given for the actual cost of recording the certificate of incorporation.

## NEW YORK RAISES REGIMENT.

First State to Do So Since War Began—All Engineers. New York state has won the honor of first raising a regiment for the regular army after the United States went to war. The organization will be designated the 1st Reserve Engineers, and will be officered almost entirely by men taken from the Engineer Officers' Reserve Corps. Its 1,200 members got their training in public construction work in New York.

LONDON, April 17.—A British admiral's statement issued last night says: "In consequence of German submarine attacks on British hospital ships, in direct and flagrant contravention of the Hague convention, a large squadron of British and French airplanes carried out a reprisal bombardment of the town of Freiburg Saturday. Many bombs were dropped with good results. "Despite a large number of air fights with hostile airplanes, all our machines except three returned safely."

## GERMAN LOSS 100,000 IN TREMENDOUS BATTLE USHERED IN BY FRENCH

Nivelle's Men, Fighting Furiously, Inflict Terrible Punishment On Teutons Between Soissons and Rheims.

## HINDENBURG'S COUNTER ATTACKS FAIL TO REGAIN LOST GROUND

Great Effort of French Made in Face of Twenty Divisions of Enemy in Formidable Positions and Enormous Number of Guns.

## One of Greatest Battles in History Progresses on Aisne, Says Berlin

BERLIN, April 17, via London, 5:55 p.m.—"One of the greatest battles of the mighty war, and therefore also in world's history," says the official statement issued today by the German army headquarters staff, "is in progress on the River Aisne."

PARIS, April 17.—Germany suffered another crushing blow upon the western front yesterday, when forty miles of the strongest part of her line were wrested from her with an estimated loss of nearly 100,000 killed, wounded and prisoners. All France hails the victory as a brilliant demonstration of the skill of her generals and the courage of her troops.

The great offensive opened by the French from Soissons to Rheims is likely to extend still farther tomorrow or the day after. The tremendous assault on the German lines had long been carefully planned and for a month past French artillery had been pounding the enemy's position.

The Germans were well aware of what was coming, as they showed by a number of furious attacks made, notably at Sappignol and Godat farm, the object of finding out something definite in regard to the French preparation. The invaders had manned naturally formidable positions with effectives amounting to at least twenty divisions and an enormous number of guns well supplied with munitions.

French Sweep Forward. The battle opened on the left of the line, where, shortly after 8 o'clock in the morning, the French infantry swept forward in an irresistible wave. In spite of a stiff resistance the Germans were driven back, and inside of half an hour prisoners began streaming toward the French rear by hundreds. The struggle was hottest east of Loivre, as well as in the whole sector of Berry-au-Bac and to the east of Craonne, but the French heavy shells were too much for the Germans and before noon the whole first line was won.

On the right the action began a little later in the morning. The French met with a very determined resistance and the fighting was terrible. For several hours of heroic struggle the infantry, thanks to the support of several hundred heavy quick-firing guns, they have forced the enemy's first line. It was a fine success, as the terrain was most difficult and the positions formidable.

German Counter Attack. In the afternoon the Germans counter-attacked with extreme violence almost everywhere along the front. The majority of their reserves were engaged south and east of the Brimont ridge. It is from the Brimont fort, built on a crest which dominates all the plain around, that the Germans have bombarded the city of Rheims. The French have not only held this ridge, which is likely to play a prominent part in the coming fighting, but they have also driven the enemy back to Berniercourt and have gone far beyond the famous position which they lost in the first week of the war. The Germans failed to win back at the battle of the Marne.

According to the latest news reaching Paris, the Germans are bombarding the lost trenches furiously, counter attacking from the front, but they have not been able to get back into the night. The struggle is particularly fierce in the region of Craonne, but the French have so far managed to hold their position.

Supreme Test at Hand. (Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press.) BRITISH HEADQUARTERS IN FRANCE, April 16, via London.—The hot flames of war are raging over the entire western front on plans elaborated at protracted conferences between Gen. Nivelle and Field Marshal Haig and the war council of France and England. The results already attained justify the conclusion that the supreme military test of the war is near at hand.

The part to be played by each belligerent has been definitely agreed upon, and a schedule has been arranged for the great cohesive force. Various tanks have been precisely aligned along the wide-reaching battle lines.

## WAR'S GREAT TEST AT HAND: BRITISH ADVANCE FURTHER

French Gain Confidence. It was planned that the British should strike from Arras while the French guns were still roaring their preparatory fire. The British have more divisions in the first stages of the British advance have given the French great confidence in the inauguration of their own enterprises.

The whole struggle in the western theater promises to be a final one. The allies are prepared as never before to cooperate in the most complete manner. The British have more divisions on the western front than would have been thought possible a year ago, and however much of an "easterner" Field Marshal von Hindenburg may have been brought up, he will have to devote his entire time and attention to western events for some weeks to come.

Already a half score of Germany's best divisions have been smashed to pieces by the British onslaught and